

DISCLAIMER – Steep Slope Hazard Areas

This map identifies areas that have been categorized as potential steep slope hazard areas. The map does not purport to identify actual slope hazards or existing risks for specific properties. Depending upon the nature of any proposed development, further investigation of the site and a detailed evaluation of the slope hazard by a licensed geological engineer or engineering geologist may be recommended or even required. The information included on this map is subject to change without notice. King County makes no representations or warranties, expressed or implied, as to accuracy, completeness, timeliness, or rights to the use of such information. King County shall not be liable for any errors, omissions, or inaccuracies in such information regardless of their cause, and King County shall not be liable for any decision made, action taken, or action not taken by the user in reliance upon such information. This document is not intended for use as a surveyed product. King County shall not be liable for any general, special, indirect, incidental, or consequential damages including, but not limited to, lost revenues or lost profits resulting from the use or misuse of the information contained on this map. Any sale of this map is prohibited except by written permission of King County.

BACKGROUND

Steep slopes are defined as slopes that are greater than 40% grade (about 21 degrees slope) and greater than 10 feet high. Steep slopes are regulated as critical areas through the King County Zoning Code (21A.24); development on or near steep slopes may be subject to restrictions. Critical areas restrictions in code call for a 50-foot buffer around steep slopes unless reduced following a geotechnical study of the site and the slope. For that reason, a 50-foot-buffer depiction is included here in iMap.

Steep slopes are regulated in part because of the potential for erosion and slope instability leading to landsliding. Development is only allowed on or near steep slopes if a geotechnical evaluation shows that the slope is stable or that mitigation is included in the development proposal to ensure that the development will not create a landslide hazard and that the development will not be impacted by slope instability. These are essentially the same standards that must be met for larger-scale landslide hazards such as those shown on the map of Potential Landslide Hazards (also in iMap). As such, a complete view of all of the potential landslide hazards for a specific property should include a review of the location and heights of steep slopes in combination with the potential landslide hazards shown elsewhere.

This mapping is based upon elevation data that were collected through LiDAR surveys (Light Detection And Ranging) with data collected at different times and resolutions. LiDAR is an airborne scanner that provides detailed topographic information, and readings from adjacent data points can be used to calculate slope angle. Areas that are shown as steep on this map were calculated to have slope angles in excess of 40%. Steep slopes less than 10 feet high were filtered out of the data set, but some small slopes remain. In addition, for some areas the available LiDAR data are of very low-resolution and/or subject to data collection or processing problems that further limit accuracy. Although the LiDAR data provide the most accurate depiction of the ground surface we have, it is important to remember that corrupted and/or insufficient data locally result in inaccurate site depictions.

For further information and general guidance in using this map, contact the King County Department of Permitting and Environmental Review at 206-296-6600.